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Georgia Southern University Museum reopens, celebrates Earth Sciences Week

October 8, 2021



After nearly three years and following extensive architectural renovations, the Georgia Southern Museum, one of the longest-standing educational centers on the University's Statesboro Campus, reopens to visitors on Oct. 10.

"It has been a long project, but well worth the journey," said Georgia Southern Museum Director Brent Tharp, Ph.D. "The upgraded facility and newly designed galleries represent a new era for the museum. Visitors will still find old friends, like the mosasaur, but exhibited in new more exciting ways, and will make new discoveries with never before exhibited artifacts in expanded permanent exhibits preserving the area's culture. We are really excited to be back open to the public."

The Georgia Southern Museum serves as the premier institution interpreting the natural and cultural history of Georgia's coastal plain. The museum displays permanent exhibits and changing exhibits curated by the University's faculty and students, and provides a place where researchers can explore its collections and students of all ages can learn.

As part of its reopening celebration, the Museum will recognize Earth Sciences Week with events featuring social media videos and interactive displays by Georgia Southern students, faculty and alumni. Highlighted events for Earth Sciences Week include:

Earthcache Day and reopening of Museum

Oct. 10, 2-5 p.m.

The Museum will open to visitors at 2 p.m. and the Museum will kick off a weeklong geocache scavenger hunt on the Statesboro Campus.

Minerals Day

Oct. 11, virtual

Follow the Museum on social media for a video about the economic minerals of Georgia featuring professor Kelly Vance, Ph.D., of the Geology and Geography Department.

Earth Observation Day

Oct. 12, virtual

Follow the Museum on social media to hear from Georgia Southern senior, Reilly Corkran, who will discuss how geographers use remote sensing in a video that will appear on our social media feeds.

National Fossil Day

Oct. 13, virtual

Curator of Paleontology Kathlyn Smith, Ph.D., will discuss the brain of the extinct whale, *Georgiacetus*, and how it compares to living whales on an exclusive video on social media

Rotunda: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Explore fossils with paleontologists Smith and Stephanie Lukowski, Museum curator of education, at the Russell Union Rotunda.

Museum: Noon to 1 p.m.

Georgia Southern student, Lauren Vieth, will teach visitors what is and isn't a dinosaur

Geoscience for Everyone Day

Oct. 14, virtual

Learn about the geoscientists here at Georgia Southern and what they do via a video on the Museum's social media channels

Museum, 9-11:10 a.m., 3:30-5 p.m.

Student Autumn Arnold will host a rock and mineral identification table

Geologic Map Day

Oct. 15, virtual

Nick Radko, senior lecturer in the Geology and Geography Department, will explain how geologic maps work and what they can tell us, highlighting the geologic map of Georgia.

Museum, Noon to 2 p.m.

Student Josey Kearns will teach visitors about what is and isn't a dinosaur

International Archaeology Day

Oct. 16

The museum is closed on Saturdays but look for a video featuring alumna Rhianna Bennett ('18), Georgia Southern alumna (2018), speaking about her work as an archaeologist and how archaeology relates to museums.

Outside of Earth Sciences Week events, visitors to the museum can explore redesigned permanent exhibitions in two new galleries — the Delma and Beverly Presley Gallery and the Jack and Addie D. Averitt Gallery — which showcase items from the museum's permanent collection such as the impressive mosasaur fossil skeleton display and extensive cultural history collections. Highlights of the museum's permanent collection include a rare, pre-Civil War cotton gin, artifacts of the Gullah Geechee, and other significant collections documenting the interaction of the unique environment and cultures of south Georgia.

The "Uncharted Worlds: The Natural History of Georgia's Coastal Plain" exhibit explores dramatic changes to Georgia's landscape, the arrival of humans, and the coastal plain we know today. A complementary exhibit, "Charted Worlds: The Cultural History of Georgia's Coastal Plain," features important stories of the interactions between cultures and the environment that created the distinct traditions and heritage of Georgia's coastal plain.

The changing exhibits gallery allows the museum to display compelling artifacts and histories. "Saints and Sinners: Salvation and Damnation in Latin American Folk Art," the museum's first bilingual exhibit, will remain on display through the start of next year. Curated by Michael Van Wagenen, Ph.D., associate professor of history, the exhibit showcases more than 100 extraordinary pieces of art covering 1,000 years of history. Georgia Southern students helped create an experience that examines how Europeans, Americans, Africans and their common descendants wrestled with the existential questions of life, death and the hereafter in a uniquely Latin American way.

"The museum strives to ensure that our students and the faculty they work with are more than just visitors," said Tharp. "Together with the museum, they develop exhibits and programs as curators, designers and educators, and the community benefits from these unique learning experiences."

Located on the Statesboro Campus' Sweetheart Circle in the Rosenwald Building, the Georgia Southern Museum will be open weekly Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Sunday, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. It is closed Monday, Saturday and on University holidays.

Admission to the museum is \$4 per person; however, for a limited time the museum also will accept donations for admission. Children 3 years of age and younger, museum members, and Georgia Southern students receive free admission.

For more information, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/museum.

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